

# **The Future of Children's Behavioral Health Care in Massachusetts**

## **Building a Strength-Based, Family-Driven System of Care**

**April 13, 2009**

**Northeastern University**

# **Strengths and Needs Discovery**

# Getting Started

- Meet the Family
- Explain wraparound process to family
- Listen and hear parents
  - Builds hope, builds trust
  - Establishes Parents as leaders of this process
- Vision – work with family to develop a vision
- Strengths discovery - explore individual and family strengths in the different life domains
- Needs exploration - explore individual and family needs in the different life domains
- These 3 components are the starting point for the care plan process and the care plan document.

# Develop Vision

- What would you like your life to look like in one year?
- Why are we here?
- Use family voice
- Positive, strengths based
- Only one or two sentences

# Vision Statement Examples

- We are a well-rounded, stable and happy family
- Our family is successfully reunified
- Everyone is off Probation
- Our family gets along and there is peace in our home

# Strengths Discovery

- Informal chat, listen to family stories, look at family pictures
- Ask about good news
- Identify assets
- Ask about friends, customs, hobbies, heroes, & dreams
- Ask family about past problems and how they were solved – this will identify strengths
- Explore strengths across the different life domains

# Needs exploration across 8 life domains

- School/Work
- Home/Family
- Emotional/Behavioral
- Medical
- Financial
- Cultural/Spiritual
- Safety/Legal
- Social/Fun

# Getting to Functional Strengths

Questions to ask yourself:

What is the function of the strength?

How does the strength work in their life?

Ask questions to pull the HOW out of the strength: How is she creative?

How do others see the strength?



# Strengths Building

## Descriptive

vs.

## Functional

Robert likes children

Robert likes to play with and help out younger kids.

Carmen is intelligent

Carmen understands ideas quickly

Angela loves her children

Angela wants to spend more time with her children

Marcus is a good basketball coach

Marcus likes to teach and play basketball

# Strengths Building

## Functional

Robert likes to play with and help out younger kids.

Carmen understands ideas quickly

Angela wants to spend more time with her children

Marcus likes to teach and play basketball

## Planned Action

When Robert earns his points in school he can spend time helping out the Pre K class

Carmen will tutor Robert in English

Angela and her children will eat dinner together each day at the table

Marcus will play one-on-one with Robert

# Needs Identification

- Family voice
- Identify needs across the different life domains
- System vs. family needs – incorporate both
- Needs are not services (Jo needs counseling)
- Have family select which needs they would like to work on first

# Examples of Needs

- Joe needs a way to make it to her classes in school
- Mary needs a way to feel better in school
- John needs to manage his anger in a safe way
- The family needs a way to have fun together
- Maria needs a way to feel more confident with her parenting
- The kids need a way to get involved in recreational activities

# Identifying Family Supports

- Natural Supports
  - Listen to the Family
  - Get to know the Family
  - Get to know the Family's Community/Neighborhood
  - Get to know the Family's Culture
- Formal Supports
  - Recognize Formal Supports

# Who and What is a Natural Support

A Natural Support is an informal support and may be:

- Family and friends
- Neighbors
- Individuals in the community, e.g. coach, minister, mentor, etc.
- People with similar experiences or problems, e.g., support group

# What Natural Supports Can Provide

- Emotional support
- Decreased social isolation
- Concrete help
- Resource acquisition
- Greater understanding of community
- System navigation
- Effective intervention or support strategies

# Summary

- We have the start of a Strengths and Needs Assessment
- We have the family's vision
- We have a list of Natural and Formal Supports to contact
- We have potential meeting times from family



# **Building a Collaborative Family Team**

# What is a Care Plan Team?

- The child and family identify a group of people who will work with them and help prepare the Care Plan.
- The Care Plan Team is composed of **informal and formal** members who will continue to support the family after leaving the program.
- The Care Plan Team meets as frequently as needed (at least once a month).

# Collaborative Team Meetings

- Cooperation among the various organizations the family is involved with
- Keep team on the “same page”
- Provide a process for care to be coordinated
- Combine Professional and Experiential Expertise to give us the best chance of creating a Plan that fits this particular family’s culture and values

# Utilizing Supports

- After supports have been identified, it is up to the family to decide which resources to utilize.
- With the team, the family then decides to what extent these supports will be utilized and how they will be contacted.
- Be prepared to assist the family in re-establishing relationships that may have deteriorated.

# Engaging Team Members

- Approach potential team members identified by the youth and family.
- Describe the wraparound process and clarify the potential role and responsibilities of each team member.
- Ask the potential team members if they will participate.
- Learns their perspectives on the family strengths and needs, and learns about their needs and preferences for the meeting.

# First Meeting Arrangements

- Care Coordinator integrates information gathered from all sources to arrange meeting time, location and resources (ex. child care).
- Meeting time and location should be accessible and comfortable for all.
- Care Coordinator prepares materials – including the strengths and needs discovery and vision – to be distributed to team members.

# Team Building

- Preparation
  - Does everyone know what to expect?
  - Ground rules
    - Positive focus/strengths based
    - Avoid jargon/acronyms
- Membership
  - Goal: 50% Formal / 50% Informal
  - Multiple perspectives (Family & System)
  - Represent family's culture and community

# Initial Care Plan Meeting Agenda

- Develop initial plan of care
  - Determine ground rules
  - Review and add to strengths and needs
  - Review/update family vision
  - Describe and prioritize needs
  - Create goals
  - Brainstorm options based on strengths
  - Select options to work on
  - Assign action steps